

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 02647 261553Z
ACTION NEA-10

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R 261500 APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2822
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
DIA WASHDC
SECDEF
USIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 2647

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, SY
SUBJECT: SYRIAN MEDIA SUMMARY FOR APRIL 25, 1977

1. MEDIA LED WITH STORY OF MURDER TWO SYRIAN ARMY OFFICERS
AT HANDS OF "FOUR ARMED ELEMENTS FROM DISSIDENT GROUPS"
(REJECTION FRONT MEMBERS). PRESS HEADLINED: "AFTER REPEATED
ATTEMPTS BY DISSIDENT GROUPS TO ASSASSINATE PEACE IN BEIRUT,
DETERRENT FORCES BESIEGE THEIR STRONGHOLDS AND ARREST
NUMBER OF TROUBLEMAKERS, TURNING THEM OVER TO COMPETENT
AUTHORITIES."

2. LEAD EDITORIAL IN AL-BAATH ENTITLED, "THE RULE AND THE
EXCEPTION IN LEBANON." ACCUSED UNNAMED FORCES OF CONSPIRING
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TO DISRUPT PEACE IN LEBANON AND REITERATED SYRIA'S
DETERMINATION TO CARRY OUT ITS MANDATE. COLUMN LINKED
SUCH INCIDENTS TO PROGRESS SARKIS MAKING TOWARD BUILDING
"STRONG CENTRAL ENTITY." COLUMN PREDICTED THAT RE-
ESTABLISHMENT LEBANESE NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS WOULD NOT
TAKE LONG, AND TERMED PROGRESS IN NATIONAL DIALOGUE

INITIATED BY GOVERNMENT AS "ENCOURAGING." EDITORIAL
CONCLUDED WITH STRONG WARNING THAT ADF WOULD USE "HARSH
DETERRENT MEASURES" TO DEAL WITH ANY FUTURE SUCH INCIDENTS.

3. VISITING AMERICANS REPRESENTING THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF ARAB-AMERICANS WERE FEATURED IN PICTURE ON FRONT PAGES
MEETING WITH PRES. ASAD. GROUP LAUDED ASAD'S EFFORTS
"WHICH SAVED LEBANON FROM TRAGEDY." ASAD THANKED THEM FOR
THEIR EFFORTS AND THOSE OF THEIR ABAR-AMERICAN BROTHERS.
SAME DELEGATION ALSO MET WITH BAATH PARTY DEPSEC GEN
AL-AHMAR, MIN. OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADI, MINECON
IMADI, AND MINCULTURE NAJAH.

4. IN COMMENTARY ENTITLED, "ARAB BOYCOTT AND COUNTER
LEGISLATION," THAWRA COLUMNIST ARGUED THAT US HAD APPLIED
BOYCOTTS AGAINST COUNTRIES WHICH WERE NOT OCCUPYING US
TERRITORY. HE CHARACTERIZED ARAB BOYCOTT AS ONE OF "SELF
DEFENSE" AND STATED US LEGISLATORS OPENED THEMSELVES TO
THE CHARGES OF BIAS. HE NOTED THAT ARAB BOYCOTT WAS
INSITUTUTED AGAINST COUNTRY OCCUPYING ARAB LAND FROM
WHICH ORIGINAL INHABITANTS WERE BEING EXPELLED, AND
CLAIMED IT WAS IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL RESOLUTIONS
SUCH AS BOYCOTT APPLIED AGAINST RHODESIA. COLUMNIST
CHARGED THAT ANTI-BOYCOTT LEGISLATION PASSED AS RESULT
OF ZIONIST PRESSURE AND LAMENTED ENACTMENT OF THIS
MEASURE AT TIME WHEN US PROMOTING ME SETTLEMENT.
HE CONCLUDED THAT LEGISLATION WOULD NOT LATER BOYCOTT
PRINCIPLE AND THAT IN END US ECONOMY WOULD SUFFER.

5. COMMENT: REPRESENTATIVES OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
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OF ARAB AMERICANS DID NOT CONTACT EMBASSY DURING
THEIR VISIT TO DAMASCUS.
PELLETREAU

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NNN

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** UNCLASSIFIED

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